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ABSTRACT

Agents for blocking T cell-mediated immune reactions are provided. Such agents are peptides, referred to hereinafter as "CD28 peptide mimetics", of from 15 to 30 amino acids in length. The CD28 peptide mimetics comprise the hexapeptide motif 'MYPPPY', SEQ ID NO: 1, or a retro-inverso isomer thereof. The ~~CD-28~~ CD28 peptide mimetics further comprise flanking sequence at the amino and carboxyl terminus of the hexapeptide motif. ~~Such flanking sequence permit the CD28 peptide mimetic to assume a polyproline II (PPII) conformation when placed in water or a buffered solution at physiological pH and a temperature of about 25° C.~~ Methods for treating subjects with T cell mediated autoimmune diseases or disorders are also provided. Such methods comprise administering one or more of the ~~CD-28~~ CD28 peptide mimetics to a subject which has with such a disease or disorder. ~~30. The present invention also relates to a method of blocking activation and proliferation of CD4+ cells. The method comprises contacting such cells with one or more of the present CD-28 peptide mimetics.~~